



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **This Week's Healthy SC Challenge Tips**

*First Family Encourages Healthy Changes in Nutrition, Exercise and Tobacco Use*

**Columbia, S.C. –March 27, 2009** – The Healthy SC Challenge is the Sanford family's effort to get all South Carolinians to do just a little more to live a healthier lifestyle. The tips are designed to encourage individuals and communities to live healthier lifestyles in three categories - nutrition, exercise and help to quit smoking. The tips can also be found on the challenge's website, [www.healthysc.gov](http://www.healthysc.gov).

### **Healthy Tips**

#### **Nutrition**

Make this year's spring break memorable by having fun and helping yourself, your friends, and others stay safe and healthy.

Limit alcohol: If drinking alcohol is part of your break, remember that it can impair your judgment and actions. Alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes kill someone every 31 minutes and nonfatally injure someone every two minutes. Don't drink and drive. There are plenty of non-alcoholic alternatives.

Be active: You've probably been sitting most of the year working at the computer, studying, or in class. During the break, take the opportunity to start a fitness program. Do a variety of fun activities like walking, dancing, playing volleyball, swimming, and more. It doesn't need to be hard to be beneficial. Avoid injury by starting any new activity slowly. We all benefit from participating in regular, moderate-intensity physical activity for 30 minutes most, preferably all, days of the week.

Plan a successful trip: If you are going on a trip, be prepared. Are vaccinations required? Are there special food, destination, or other things you need to consider ahead of time? If you are taking medications, do you have enough for the trip? Know what's happening en route or at your travel destination.

Protect yourself from the sun: After a cold winter, it's tempting to stay in the hot sun all day. Although getting a little sun can have some benefits, excessive and unprotected sun exposure can result in premature aging, changes in skin texture, and skin cancer. Always wear sunscreen with at least SPF 15. For eye protection, wear wraparound sunglasses that provide 100 percent UV ray protection.

Watch your step: There may be temptations on your break that involve different or high-risk activity. Think twice before putting yourself at risk for injury. Be sure to use appropriate safety gear before venturing out, such as seat belts, life vests, or knee pads. Remember that unintentional injuries kill more Americans in their first three decades of life than any other cause of death. In fact, injuries (both unintentional and those caused by acts of violence) are among the top ten killers for Americans of all ages.

Know the ropes: When swimming and boating, know what's expected and what you can do to prevent injury or death for yourself and others. Know how to swim. Wear your life jacket while boating. Avoid alcoholic beverages while boating. Complete a boating education course. Participate in the vessel safety check program. Be aware of the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Be smoke free: Avoid smoking and secondhand smoke. Just 20 minutes after smoking that last cigarette, your body begins a series of positive changes that continue for years. Quitting is one of the best things you can do for yourself and others.

Eat Healthy: Having fun takes energy and fuel. Be sure to eat a variety of foods, including plenty of vegetables, fruits, and whole grain products. Also include low-fat dairy products, lean meats, poultry, fish, and legumes. Drink lots of water and go easy on the salt, sugar, alcohol, and saturated fat. Good nutrition should be part of an overall healthy lifestyle, including regular physical activity, not smoking, and stress management.

Get help: If you or a friend has an alcohol or drug problem, has thoughts of suicide, or is in crisis for any reason, get help. Call 911 for emergency services, 800-662-4357 for substance abuse help, and 800-273-TALK (8255) for the national suicide prevention lifeline.

**-Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)**

**Physical Activity**

Deciding to become a little more active than you are right now leads to improvements in your health and outlook on life. It's easy to increase your walking amounts, since you already do it throughout the day. But how much more should you do? How often should you do it? How fast should you go? For how long? These walking FAQs are important to consider when building a walking exercise program.

The FIT formula – Frequency (how often), Intensity (how fast) and Time (how long) – helps you find answers. When you do any physical activity, start at a low level and increase slowly. This goes for walking amounts, as well. Doing too much too fast can lead to injuries that set you back instead of move you forward. When you're ready to increase your activity, alter just one part of the FIT formula at a time.

**-Arthritis Foundation, [www.arthritistoday.org](http://www.arthritistoday.org)**

**Tobacco**

Oral cancer is one of the deadliest forms of cancer. Only about half of people diagnosed with oral cancer survive more than five years. That's because cancer in the neck and mouth spreads quickly. Often, it isn't found until it's very advanced. Oral cancer includes cancer of the throat, lips, mouth, tongue, gums and salivary glands. Anyone can get oral cancer. Although smoking increases the risk, more than 25% of oral cancer cases occur in people who never smoked. The best way to catch oral cancer early is to have regular exams by your dentist and to learn how to check yourself.

**-Columbia University Medical Center, School of Dental & Oral Surgery**

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*The Healthy SC Challenge is an outcome-based, cooperative effort aimed at encouraging individuals, communities and organizations across the state to show shared responsibility in developing innovative ways to improve the health of South Carolina's citizens. For more information about the Healthy SC Challenge, please visit [www.healthysc.gov](http://www.healthysc.gov), or call 803-737-4772.*